

The Strategic Use of the Internet: Understanding and Utilizing Social Media Today

It's become impossible to ignore the advancements to technology in today's society, specifically the enhancements and benefits that a social media presence has for an organization's overall success communication ability. Laying the foundation of social media techniques can enhance an organization's engagement and connections, and understanding the value of this easily utilized resource is pivotal. This session will explain how to apply the basics of social media, where it came from, and how to properly use it. Examples of social media utilization will be thoroughly explained, as well tactics to approach different avenues within social media and how to work around predetermined reservations or hesitations about this powerful resource.

Steve Lowisz is a widely renowned and trusted entrepreneurial business expert. A highly-rated speaker, author and educator, Steve has served as a consultant across the globe for many Fortune 500 organizations. Having started and led multiple businesses in the field of Human Resources, in 1999 Steve founded Qualigence International, a recruitment research and professional search firm headquartered in Livonia, Michigan, of which continues to serve as CEO. In addition, Steve is also the principal consultant for Lowisz Consulting, which provides both group and individual leadership development consulting and individualized goal planning. Steve's business philosophy has always been to put the best interests of his clients first. His continual goal is to spread the word of successful business practices to fellow partners, associates and colleagues.

This session will cover:

- Understand how social media developed into an indispensable tool for organizations to communicate with
- The benefits and advantages of social media
- Laying the groundwork – basics accompanying different social media mediums
- How to apply basics of social media into everyday usage
- Examples of best approaches for various (most popular) social media tools

Mentoring – The Strategic Use of Social Media in your Ministry

If you are interested in learning more about the practical application of social media in your specific ministry, mentoring sessions will be available throughout the conference. Those interested in this mentoring opportunity should submit a short summary of their use of social media and the internet (if applicable) along with any supporting information including ministry websites, tools being utilized, etc. Mentoring is available to all attendees, however preference will be given to those that attend the full workshop.

In this presentation you will learn:

- **Laying the Groundwork:** Basics of popular social networks and who used them
- **History:** How social media developed into an indispensable communication tool
- **Risks:** Getting prepared to use Social Media
- **Rewards:** The 5 primary objectives of Social Media today
- **How To:** Applying basics of social media into everyday usage

Laying the Groundwork

- Social Media has become impossible to ignore in today's technological society
- Laying the foundation of social media techniques can enhance an organization's engagement and connections, quickly increasing their awareness and content dissemination
- Understanding the value of this resource is essential
- Important to understand who is using social media and how they use it to target the right people

How Has Social Media Changed?

- Web 1.0 – One way Communication
- Web 2.0 – Two way Communication

What is Considered Social Media?

- Personal Networking
- Business Networking
- Content Networking
- Influence
- Blogs
- Mobile

Who Uses It (And Why?)

Around the Globe

- **62%** of people around the globe communicate through social networking sites
- **85%** of people around the globe send and receive emails
- More than **6 in 10** people worldwide utilize social media
- **61.3%** of European population uses the Internet
- **Germany** and **Iceland** top the list: **82.7%** of German population uses the Internet, **97.8%** of Iceland's population uses the Internet
- **Europe** has the largest number of Facebook subscribers in the *world*
- **Facebook** has 1.06 billion monthly active users globally
- **Google+** has 343 million active users globally
- **LinkedIn** has 200 million active users globally

- **Twitter** has 170 million active users globally
- **Pinterest** has 25 million active users globally
- **YouTube** has over 800 million unique visitors a month globally

- Ipsos Research Group

Key Terms

- ❖ **Social Networking** – The use of a dedicated Web site to communicate with other members of the site by posting messages, photographs, etc.
- ❖ **Social Media** – A platform for digital for social interaction, using highly accessible and measurable publishing techniques
- ❖ **Digital Footprint** – A trail left by interactions in a digital environment
- ❖ **Online Presence** – The state or act of being present in a digital environment
- ❖ **Digital Branding** – Using digital media to create, build, manage and revitalize the relationships between a brand and its audiences

History

Where Did it All Begin?

- 1969 – First “dial-up” Internet service provider
- 1971 – The first email was delivered
- 1985 – America Online began
- 1989 – Development of the World Wide Web
- 1995 – Newsweek: *“The Internet? Bah! Hype alert: Why cyberspace isn’t, and will never be, nirvana”*
- 1997 – The Web has 1m websites, blogging begins, AOL Instant Messenger allows chat
- 1998 – Start of Google
- 2000 – Burst of the “dot.com” bubble
- 2001 – Beginning of Wikipedia, editable online encyclopedia
- 2002 – Social networking site Friendster opens to public
- 2003 – Myspace launched
- 2004 – Facebook launched at Harvard, Podcasts began, Flickr image sharing began
- 2005 – Facebook opens to High School students, YouTube begins storing and retrieving videos, more than 8 billion web pages
- 2006 – Twitter is launched as social networking and “microblogging” site
- 2007 – Apple releases iPhone multimedia and Internet smartphone
- 2008 – Facebook passes Myspace in monthly users
- 2009 – Facebook is named as most-used social network worldwide. Twitter becomes reputable news source after story of plane crash in Hudson River breaks on Twitter, “unfriend” makes it into the New Oxford American Dictionary
- 2010 – Apple releases iPad tablet computer, 30% of global population is on the Internet, surpasses newspapers as primary news source
- 2011- Social media accessible from virtually anywhere, becomes part of our daily lives: 65 million tweets sent a day, 2 billion videos viewed on YouTube a day
- 2012 – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+ dominate Internet. More than half of adults use social media. Social Networks highly utilized by companies to enhance brand visibility
- BEYOND: Estimated that Internet users will double by 2015 – That’s 60 percent of Earth’s population!

Who is Using it and How?

- Creators – Publish web pages, write blogs, upload videos, etc
- Critics – Comment on posts and blogs and post rating and reviews
- Collectors – Use RSS Feeds and tag web pages to gather information
- Joiners – Constantly join new social networking sites
- Spectators – Read blogs, watch peer generated videos, and listen to podcasts
- Inactives – Online but do not currently participate in social media

Social Media Risks

- “Fish Bowl” effect – Must be open to criticism and scrutiny of anything posted
- Must have a process for oversight
- Must be willing to provide value and be consistent

Why is Social Media Important?

- Allows ‘real-time’ engagement with your followers
- Consistent interaction is the key to driving follow loyalty
- The telephone continues to decrease its usage, paving the way for more online interaction

5 Goals of Social Networking

1. **Awareness**
2. **Trust**
3. **Engagement**
4. **Traffic**
5. **Followers**

Best Practices

- Join the Conversation
 - Don’t just ‘tell’ – provide value
 - Comment often and include links
 - Reply quickly to question and comments

How To

Facebook

A social networking site that allows users to create profiles, upload photos and video, and keep in touch with friends and associates. Usually a more personal social networking site, but can be used for organizations if used properly.

Why use Facebook?

- Many organizations have very successful Facebook pages that engage their audience
- Increase brand awareness: Showcase your organization's logo, photos, news
- Make announcements, interact with followers, engage in discussion about specific topics, provide your visitors with fresh content on a weekly basis
- Host discussion or have special online events exclusive to fans of your Facebook page
- Comment on other organization's pages to engage in interaction; join groups of interest
- Consistency is key to keep people coming back and to share and "like" your page
- The more "Likes," the more the word is spread about your organization
 - **Starbucks** – 33 million likes
 - **Disney** – 42 million likes, lots of interaction and chatter
- Have fun but keep it professional

Twitter

A social networking tool that allows users to create 140-character status updates as well as follow others for news, insight, content sharing.

Why Use Twitter?

Initially a more personal outlet, Twitter has taken the world by storm. Users are able to share their content at a rapid pace, with the overall goal of building brand awareness by "Retweets" and "Shares." All you need is a valid email address to begin. Then, upload your organization's photo and information and begin Tweeting!

- Share your content and others' in order to gain followers and be known as a Thought Leader
- Ask questions to your followers to engage in conversation
- Reference others' content to establish yourself or your organization as a primary focus
- Excellent for outbound messaging
- Great for establishing engagement
- Highest viral potential – interaction is most important
- Use for "sentiment monitoring" – how do people feel about your organization or message
- Get others to tweet about you and re-tweet your messages

Think About Your Twitter Voice: Twitter is a direct - often clever - way of getting your message across to your audience. Think about how you want your organization to be perceived as you Tweet.

- **Note:** It's OK to recycle content on Twitter. Re-reference your content on different days so long as you give a wide enough timeframe between each Tweet so as not to annoy your followers. Don't

tweet in Bursts – five in five minutes then none for hours. Spread out your content to maintain engagement.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn reported more than 200 million users as of January 2013. Creating a page for your organization is a smart way to share news and updates and reach out to millions of people.

Why Use LinkedIn?

- Create an organizational page that can have its own banner photo as well as standard logo. Sub-pages feature the ability to include video, descriptions and connections to current staff, volunteers, etc.
 - Allows for more overall engagement and accessibility. Organizations can also feature updates that allow their followers to be informed about events and announcements and increase visibility
 - Within your organization’s page you can promote specific topics, services, event, and members can recommend them
 - Create a group that includes discussion and engagement about your organization’s interests. This allows others to share content and see your content
 - Excellent for branding and showing your expertise in a specific area
 - Ensure organization page is detailed, accurate and updated
- **Proceed with Care:** With so many professionals on LinkedIn, it increases the possibility of spam. Be careful when inviting people to join your groups or follow your organization’s page. Make sure your outreach is personal.

Google+

Google+ (Google Plus) is newer to the scene, but is becoming an incredibly important platform to businesses and other organizations. Initially written off as a flop, it allows for brands and organizations to reach a wider audience by adding their own “community” pages. This sharing of content allows users to become Thought Leaders in a specific subject or topic.

Why Use Google+?

- Since the addition of communities, Google+ added 35 million active users in just 2.5 months
 - A quiet but growing giant, it’s a good idea to hop onto the Google+ wagon now
- **A PLUS:** Other Google+ users will see your posts if they Google Search a term that you’ve posted about, increasing visibility for your organization.

Pinterest

Initially seen as a digital crafts pinboard, Pinterest has taken the business/organizational world by storm as a place to share photos and updates.

Why Use Pinterest?

- Organizations use Pinterest to share their content, with others. Organizations can follow each other and engage in content sharing.
- Art links back to organization's website, engaging user and leading them to find out more about your organization and mission.

YouTube

YouTube is a video sharing website on which users can upload, share, and view videos. Hugely popular, this social network can be extremely beneficial for organizations whose base is highly engaged.

Why Use YouTube?

- Video is a powerful channel to inform your audience
- Response, engagement, and popularity are high for short videos
- Chatter drives engagement and click-throughs

What to Post

- No fluff – Stay relevant, interesting or even controversial
- Interact
- Ask questions
- Post replies
- Request comments
- Mention others
- Give and ask for opinions
- **Remain consistently inconsistent**

Where to Start

Social media can be overwhelming at first, which is why it's important to make a game plan for your organization. Most social media tools are free, so incorporating these tools into your organization's structure shouldn't cost much so long as you have the manpower devoted to maintaining them.

- **Make a Plan:** Decide which social media tools your company wants to use first.
 - Don't immediately try to sign up for every single one in one day; this can lead to a sense of urgency and disorganization.
- **Create a Schedule:** A calendar of social media updates can be extremely helpful when it comes to balancing the maintenance of social media with the rest of your responsibilities.
 - Decide who on your team is going to tackle these tools and help to ensure they stick to the plan.

- Start slow and work your way up as your organization becomes more comfortable with these tools.
- **Start with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and your #1 local network:** Because Facebook is the most popular personal networking site, this can be a good entry point for your message.
 - You need only an email address and basic information to create your own profile.
 - From there, you can create your own page and let the networking begin.

Social Networking 101

- Blog: 1-2 Posts per week
- Twitter: 6-8 tweets per day with no more than 2 linkbacks_
- Facebook Brand Page: 3-6 short posts per day
- YouTube: “Like” 1 Video per day and add one video per week to your ‘channel’
- Google Plus: 3-6 short posts per day
- “Like” Others comments as time permits
- Automate with tools such as HootSuite

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